

Prabuddha Bharata

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उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वराशिवोधत ।

Katha Upa, I, iii, 4

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—Swami Vivekananda.

Vol. XXV]

NOVEMBER 1920

[No. 292

CONVERSATIONS AND DIALOGUES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(RECORDED BY A DISCIPLE.)

PART II.—XXII.

[Place : The Math, Belur. Year—1902.

Subjects.—*The formation of strict rules and regulations in the Math.—“Atmaramer Kouta” and the testing of its power.—The conversation of disciple with Swami Premananda about the greatness of Swamiji.—Swamiji encouraging the disciple to propagate the Advaita Vedanta in Eastern Bengal and heartening him that in spite of matrimonial ties he can acquire spirituality.—The high faith and idea of Swamiji about the Sannyasin disciples of Sri Ramakrishna.—The infallible fruition of Nag Mahasaya's words.]*

Swamiji is now staying at the Math. A question class is held at the Math every day for the discussion of Scriptures—Swamis Suddhananda, Virajananda and Swarupananda being the principal interrogators in the class. Swamiji used to call that discussion “study for enquiry and enlightenment” and in many ways encouraged the Sannyasins and Brahmacharins to do likewise. Some day the Gita, on another day the Bhagavata, the Upanishads or Brahma-Sutra Bhasya are discussed and Swamiji being present in the classes

nearly every day helps in solving the questions. As on one side, at the bidding of Swamiji, the practice of meditation is going on at the Math, so on the other, the class for the discussion of the Scriptures is daily held, and everybody in deep deference to Swamiji's order is faithfully following the rule initiated by him. Food, sleep, study, meditation of the inmates of the Math are all now regulated by strict rules. If anybody swerves from the regulated life a little, then for the infringement of the rule he cannot get meals

from the Math that day. He has to beg from the neighbouring village and cook the food with his own hand in the Math grounds and eat. Swamiji has not stopped only at making a few rules for the regulation of the daily life of the Math members, but with deep foresight for the formation and stability of the Sangha, he has discussed the subject of the future ways, discipline, and the method of work of the Math and has at length put on record his own opinions and mandates on the subjects. That manuscript is still carefully preserved in the Belur Math.

Every day after bath, Swamiji enters the worship-room of Sri Ramakrishna, drinks a little of the holy water, touches the box containing the holy remains of the cremation of the body of Sri Ramakrishna. This box Swamiji many times would indicate as the "Atmaramerkouta." Once about this time, a few days previously, a special event happened with regard to the box. One day Swamiji after touching the box with his head was coming out of the worship-room when all of a sudden the thought crossed his mind, "Is it true that there is the indwelling of the spirit of Sri Ramakrishna in the box? Well, I will test." Thinking thus he mentally prayed to Sri Ramakrishna: "Lord, if the Maharaja who is at present in Calcutta is drawn to the Math within three days, then I shall believe that you are present here." After praying thus inwardly he came out of the worship-room and did not speak about it to anybody else and after some time altogether forgot about it. Next day he went to Calcutta for a few hours to attend to some work. Returning to Math in the evening, he heard that the Maharaj did actually come to the Trunk Road near by the Math, and stopping his carriage sent

a man in search of Swamiji, and hearing of his absence went away. Hearing the news, the thought of his own resolve arose in his mind and with eyes wide with wonder he informed his *gurubhais* about it and told them to worship the said box with deep care and reverence.

To-day is Saturday. The disciple coming to the Math in the afternoon has come to know of the true resolve of Swamiji. After prostrating at the feet of Swamiji, he sat when he learnt that Swamiji was going out for walk and had asked Swami Premananda to get ready to accompany him. It is the earnest desire of the disciple to accompany him, but thinking it improper to go without his permission, he sat silent. Swamiji wearing the *alkhalla* and the *gerrua* cap, took a stout stick in his hand and came out, Swami Premananda following. Before starting he turned to the disciple and said, "Come, will you go?" The disciple felt blessed and followed Swami Premananda.

Thinking on something, Swamiji went on his way absorbed in thought. The disciple, observing that mood of Swamiji, did not dare to break his thought by speech, and therefore entered into a conversation with Swami Premananda and asked him: "Sir, what did Sri Ramakrishna say about the greatness of Swamiji? Tell me about it."

Swamiji.— How much he used to say, how can I tell you all in a day? Sometimes he would say: 'He has incarnated from the plane of Akhanda-Sachchidananda.' * * One day he spoke thus about him: 'Even Mahamaya dares not approach him.' Really during that period he would not bow his head before any God or Goddess. Sri Ramakrishna one day put into his mouth the holy *Prasad*

of Sri Jagannath in some sweetmeats. Afterwards through the grace of God, he saw and acknowledged their truth.

Disciple.— He always enters into such jovial talk and laughter with me, but now he has become so grave, that one fears to talk to him.

Premananda.— Great souls live on such a high plane of thought as is beyond our mental conception. During the lifetime of Sri Ramakrishna we have seen that seeing Narendranath from a distance he would go into Samadhi. * * Sometimes Sri Ramakrishna would thus speak about him: 'Mother Divine! Keep his Advaita knowledge covered a little. I have much work to do through him.' Who will understand these words? Whom shall I speak to?

Disciple.— Sir, really I sometimes think that he is far above the ordinary human level. But again when he speaks and argues, he appears just like a man like one of us. I think that as if by some veil, he does not let us see into his inner greatness and nature.

Premananda.— Sri Ramakrishna would say of him, 'Whenever he will come to know of his real Swarupa (nature), he will not remain in our earthly plane but go back to his highest nature.' Therefore we feel happy to find his mind engaged in works and activities. But to see him much engaged in meditation and spiritual practices makes us apprehensive.

Now Swamiji turned to go back to the Math. Seeing Swami Premananda and the disciple near by he said, "Well, what were you talking?" The disciple said: "We were talking about Sri Ramakrishna and his words." Swamiji only heard the reply, but again lapsed into thought and walking by the road returned to the Math.

He sat on the camp-cot placed under the mango-tree and resting there some time, washed his face and while pacing the upper veranda spoke to the disciple thus: "Why do you not set about propagating Vedanta in your part of the country? There Tantrikism prevails to a fearful extent. Rouse and agitate the country with the lion-roar of Advaitavada. Then I shall know you to be a Vedantist. First open a *tal* there and teach the Upanishads, the Brahmasutras. Teach the boys the system of Brahmacharya. I have heard that in your country there is much logic-chopping of the Nyaya school. What is there in it? Only *Vyapti* (pervasiveness) and *Anumana* (inference)—on these subjects the Naiyaik Pandits are discussing for months. What does it help towards the Knowledge of the Atman? Either in your or Nag Mahasaya's village, open a *chatuspathi* (indigenous school) in which the scriptures will be studied and also the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. In this way you will advance your own good as well the good of the people, and your fame will endure.

Disciple.— Sir, I cherish no desire for name or fame. But sometimes I feel a desire to do like what you are saying. But by marriage I have got so entangled in the world that I fear my mind's desire will remain only in the mind.

Swamiji.— If you have married, what of that? As you are maintaining your parents and brothers with food and clothing, so do your wife likewise, and by giving her religious instruction draw her in your path. Think her to be a partner and helper in the living of your religious life. At other times look upon her with an even eye with others. Thinking thus all the unsteadiness of the mind will die out. What fear?

The disciple felt assured by these words of courage and fearlessness from Swamiji. After meals Swamiji sat on his own bed and the disciple got an opportunity of doing some personal service to him.

Swamiji began to speak to the disciple, enjoining him to be reverential to the Math members—"These children of Sri Ramakrishna whom you see, are wonderful *tyagis* (selfless souls), and by service of them you will attain to the purification of mind and be blessed with the vision of the Atman. You remember the words of the Gita,—“by the interrogation and service of the great souls.” Therefore you must serve them, by which you will attain your goal, and you know how much they love you.

Disciple.— But I find it very difficult to understand them. Each one seems to be a different type.

Swamiji.— Sri Ramakrishna was a wonderful gardener of souls. Therefore he has made a bouquet of different flowers and formed his Order. All different types and ideas have come into it and many more will come. Sri Ramakrishna used to say—‘Whoever has prayed to God sincerely for one day, must come here.’ Know each of those who are here, to be of great spiritual power. Because they remain shrivelled before me, do not think them to be ordinary souls. When they will go out they will be the cause of the awakening of spirituality in people. Know them to be part of the spiritual body of Sri Ramakrishna, who was the embodiment of infinite religious ideas. I look upon them with that eye. See, for instance, Rakhal who is here,—I have not even the spirituality which he has. Sri Ramakrishna looked upon him as his spiritual son and he lived and walked, ate

and slept with him. He is the ornament of our Math—our king. Similarly, Baburam, Hari, Sarada, Gangadhar, Sarat, Sasi, Subodh—you may go round the world, but it is doubtful if you will find men of such spirituality and faith in God like them. They are each a centre of religious power and in time that power will manifest.

The disciple listened in wonder, and Swamiji said again:

“But from your part of the country, besides Nag Mahasaya none came to Sri Ramakrishna. Few others who saw Sri Ramakrishna, could not appreciate him.” Remembering the name of Nag Mahasaya, Swamiji kept silent for some time. Only four or five months has he passed away. Swamiji had heard that at one time, a spring of Ganges water rose in the house of Nag Mahasaya, and remembering it he asked the disciple, “Well, how is that event? Tell me about it.”

Disciple.— I have only heard about it but not seen it with my eyes. I have heard that in a *Mahavaruni Yoga* Nag Mahasaya started with his father for Calcutta. But not getting any accommodation in the railway train for the great rush of passengers, he stayed three or four days at Narayangunge in vain and returned home. Thus Nag Mahasaya was compelled by circumstances to give up his idea of coming to Calcutta for the bath and told his father, ‘If the mind is pure, then the Mother Ganges will appear here.’ Then at the auspicious hour of the holy bath, a jet of water rose, piercing the ground of his courtyard. Those who saw it, are living to-day. But that was many years before I met him.



OCCASIONAL NOTES.

THE Indian conception of Dharma is one of the masterful ideas which have moulded Indian thought in all phases of activity and furnishes an illuminating key to its understanding and explanation. It is the prevailing idea in society, politics, law, ethics and philosophy, and is the one connecting link which binds them all together and gives a synthetic view of Indian cultural activities. Different definitions have been given of it. It has been indicated as the religious sense with which the Indian mind has environed all secular activities, or as "the totality of human duties and of human life in all its occupations, pursuits, and daily actions."

Just as, on the psychological side, the first principle to evolve from the Supreme Brahman in the order of the creation of this manifested world of names and forms, is the Hiranyagarbha, the cosmic intellect, or the universal mind which is an individual, but comprises all the different minds as part of itself, modes of of its being, not yet differentiated into separate entities; so on the ethical side, the first great principle to evolve is Dharma, from which later proceeded different individuals according to differences of Dharma. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad in a striking passage speaks of the Creator creating the world of different classes of beings, the Devas, the Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, but creation was not complete, not held in harmony and order, until Dharma was created which is their inner essential principle, than which there is nothing higher in creation, constituting the strengthening and fortifying truth of beings. The Indian idea is

that from the difference in Dharma result different bodies and different orders of beings, from the Brahma to the lowest worm, and accumulation of good Dharma gives rise to a high, and bad to a low order of embodied existence. Thus Dharma is the all-comprehensive ethical principle which is the cause of manifested world and its diverse manifoldness. Every created being and object has as its heart an inherent ethical principle of which it is the embodiment and which by its accumulation or diminution is the cause of the evolution of that embodied being.

Thus in the Indian view, there is a moral law underlying the manifested world, which is not imposed on it by an extra-cosmic Being, but inherent in it, the very stuff of its existence, and the cause of its movement and becoming. As a manifestation, this Dharma evolves, has grades, but in all its grades it has the golden thread of unity with the supreme Spirit from which it proceeds and to which it can mount. This correlation of Dharma in all its grades with the supreme Spirit of Existence, which it in all its degrees of manifestation ensouls, constitutes the Dharma of different human beings and their diverse activities and pursuits. This ethical principle by which the nature of beings and all their activities, pursuits and occupations are given a spirit-ward direction leading to the ultimate spirit-manifestation, is the Dharma of things. There is not any order of being which is without Dharma, the law of living consonant to the highest spirit, there is not one human activity without its Dharma, its law of performance, leading to the

unfoldment of the highest Self of Existence.

Dharma is of the nature of activity and movement. Mimamsaka writers have defined Dharma as that which sets man to different activities with an ultimate end in view. To them this is the masterful idea and the highest destiny of life, and they have asserted that the Vedas also inculcate actions and that those portions which do not inculcate action must be either glorificatory of action or in some way subserving the dynamism of action. Therefore, Dharma is concerned only with action, with the dynamism of human nature, with spirit-movement, with flow, Shakti, and not with the immutable, eternal, and static aspect of the world. It is thus essentially the philosophy and practice of change, movement, action. Human action in this life takes many shapes, follows many paths, assumes the form of diverse experience. The world-soul not only manifests in myriad unit souls or Jivas, but does so by a myriad formulation of mental bodies composed of diverse endowment of faculties, intellectual, ethical, æsthetic, vital. To hold all these individuals in a harmony, to go by a harmonised satisfaction of the totality of the many-sided natures and their wants to the high ground of *Moksha* or spiritual existence, where all become, *यत्रैका सर्वा प्रजा भवन्ति, यत्र सर्वे एकीभवन्ति*, is the sense and meaning of Dharma. It is a holding together, an equilibrium of different units, and of the total scope and satisfaction of diverse powers and faculties and natures which otherwise would create a chaos of collision, strife and destruction. Thus Dharma not only provides for the advancement of the individual, but also finds a place for others; while subserving his own interest it ad-

vances that of others; and in which his own progress brings a sense of greater unity with the collectivity of the whole. Anything which sets up a centre of independent egoism, bringing a sense of separation from others and upsets the benign poise of Dharma, is Adharma, sin, Avidya, Ahankara.

But how is the harmony possible, seeing that men are of so varying worth, some good, some bad; that activities, occupations and pursuits of life are of as contrasted a character, as the ethical and æsthetic nature of man; or the demands of the meditative nature and the practical, active, outward life? But here again the unifying vision of Dharma brings a saving truth; each faculty of man, his every propensity and turn of mind, is a branch from the same root of the Self and however imperfect and clouded in present action by man's falling into ignorance, contains the seed of its own perfection. None is cut off from the hold of the supreme Self from which it came, but can by being filled with Dharma change its character into a manifestation of the truth, power of the Divine Self. So also an individual, however degraded and vile is but one with the most elevated and perfect and has within himself the golden thread of unity by which he can transform himself into the latter. The coarsest function of human life, for example, the sexual passion, from which the moral nature turns away with disgust as a thing to be suppressed, cast out, has within it the golden seed of the Divine, by which it can change its present soul-degrading and coarsening character and transmute itself into the manifestation of the Divine Bliss—Kama transmuted into Prema. Every form of

human experience becomes one and united in the spirit and manifests a total and unified action. Intellect, emotion, morals, volition and action become interchangeable terms in the spirit which then informs a total, spontaneous action of all in an indistinguishable blend.

This comprehensive view of Dharma, its finding a place for all in the economy of human destiny, without suppression but by a change of direction, has been criticised by Westerners as an impossible monism, which confuses moral values, the ultimate distinction of good and bad, the angles of particularities of things. It breeds a colourless and insipid view of existence, with all its well-marked contrasts, its strong outlines, its deep colours obliterated and inspires a sluggish human action, interest in life and moral endeavour. This is to mistake the whole significance of Dharma and of the relative standards which it erects. The tendency of Dharma is to harmonise the relations of individuals to one another and of the diverse powers and faculties of human life under a philosophic scheme of the whole life directed to the unfoldment of the divine principle or Self of Man. Dharma admits grades of ethical standards because it wants to include all in its scope and raise all to the highest ethical being. It does not create a sharp irreconcilable opposition between good and evil, between moral and immoral but sees an evolution of good and morality. We know what result the view of the sharp antithesis between good and evil has led to in some orders of thinking. It has justified the strong man to exterminate the weaker neighbour, on the belief that the existence of the weak and the evil is antagonistic and subversive of the strong and good,

and must be extinguished and not improved for the good of the latter.

Dharma is preservative and elevating, and not exterminative and degrading. It gives temporary justification to the man who is in a lower stage and not capable of the highest, moralises him as much as possible where he stands but also calls on him to arduously endeavour to rise out of his present imperfection and not to tarry on his way till he has reached the goal. Taking man where he stands it tries to lift him instead of condemning him to eternal perdition because he is not yet capable of the highest. This wise relativity and its humane application in life and hope for all, even if it leads to a lack of ardour in moral progress when misunderstood, is better than the opposite exaggeration of the sharp antinomies of good and evil, moral and immoral, and the militant and cruel views it inspires.

A characteristic of the application of Dharma in the social sphere is the spontaneity, the sincerity and living touch with human values, of the action which it informs. Action proceeding from the sense of Dharma is a living, sincere human action, which brings a return of power and moral progress to the individual. It is not a mere action prompted by mechanical necessity, by response to an external compulsion out of touch with human values, and thus produces no moral advantage to the doer. The idea of Dharma combats the idea of the mechanical burden of human life, and in whatever society it will predominate, it will keep down contrivances of mechanical adjustment which multiplied only end in making man an adjunct to a machine. Dharma was predominant as an elementary

force of Indian society which based all its social work for the common good and advancement on the individual's sense of moral duty or Dharma under stress of a high spiritual significance of human acts and human life. The Indian society brought the human units in direct relation with their work, connecting a link of human value with it, by basing the performance on the Dharma. In short, social action had a moral sanction by being based on Dharma, and not mechanical force of an extraneous legislative machine. This conception of Dharma and the importance given to it fitted well with the view of life as an opportunity to grow from a natural to spiritual existence by developing in man his innate spiritual Self, and hence the emphasis on developing the human values of life and not merely outward results, quantity or mechanical efficiency.

In the Hindu scriptures, there is frequent reference to the need of transcendence of Dharma in order to reach real knowledge of the Self and freedom. In the writings of Sankara, he everywhere tries to establish that the knowledge of the Self is incompatible with the observance of Dharma, which must disappear in the free life of Self-knowledge. The sense is that Dharma and its observance apply to a certain stage of human progress, it is a self-imposed ethical law or rule of life which man accepts in a state of imperfection to help the growth of his divine nature. It is some ideal norm or standard which human life conforms to and seeks to realise by an arduous ascent to a higher level of his being. He does not still live by identity with it, it is still a standard to which he seeks to conform, and by bringing down its power and truth

to guide, influence and transform his being into the likeness of the ideal. He is still an individual with desire and interest, although the confines of his individuality has melted, the force of egoistic passions or desires attenuated by taking on a more altruistic turn. But this is not the highest level of human destiny. He must transcend this conformation to Dharma which is still external to his being and ruling him from above. He must enter into the oneness of the Atman, when he will be identified with his ethical nature in the unity of the Atman. Instead of obeying the rule of Dharma, he will be free and Dharma will be part and parcel of his being, informing a spontaneous ethical action. He will be obeying no rule higher than himself, for all will be included in him in the Highest Self; and his action, instead of being ego-centric, will be impersonal and bring a sense of closeness and unity with all. The former lower Dharmas will give place to the Self-existence, whose very nature is freedom, oneness, Bliss and which now creates a spontaneous, free, joyous action of spirit of the oneness with all, universal love, and a secure freedom raised above all conformation to external Dharma however high.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND SRI RAMAKRISHNA.

[RENDERED FROM SWAMI SARADANANDA'S
"LILAPRASANGA."]

(His second and third meetings.)

REALLY great persons with steadfast ideals in life, coming to know of the traits of greatness and nobility in others, freely acknowledge and bear witness to them and feel a wonderful elation of heart in the thought of the

greatness of others. And again finding this greatness manifested in wonderful proportions in some individual character, their mind gets absorbed in the contemplation of his greatness of character and charmed and fascinated by it. But even with all this, that circumstance does not at once draw them away from their own ideals and course of life and send them to the imitation or the following of that person. Or again, without the intervention of long association and growth of a tie of love between them, their lives do not at once take on the colour of the other person's life. A similar state of mind happened to Narendranath after his first meeting Sri Ramakrishna. Charmed and attracted by the beauty of Sri Ramakrishna's personality, his wonderful renunciation, his great sincerity of life and the correspondence between what he professed and what he lived, still Narendranath did not consent at once to take him as his ideal and hero of life. Consequently, returning home, the thought of the wonderful personality and acts of Sri Ramakrishna occurred frequently in his mind for some days afterwards, but he postponed his second visit to him in fulfilment of his promise to the distant future and gave attention to his own duties. At this time, besides his spiritual meditation and study at college, he was engaged in the culture of music and physical exercises. Moreover, with the object of the mental and spiritual improvement and culture of his friends he was establishing societies for prayer and study in different parts of Calcutta. Therefore busy in many works it was natural that Narendranath's promise of going to Dakshineswar was shelved for some time. But although oblivious of it in the absorption of his daily works, the memory of his promise

and his great love of truth were urging him to go to Dakshineswar one day and fulfil his word. Therefore we find him after a month going one day to Dakshineswar alone on foot. He told us later about the event of that day in the following way, which we re-narrate to the reader:

"I did not know that the Kali temple of Dakshineswar was so distant from Calcutta, having gone only once before and that in a carriage. I had gone several times to the house of my friends, Dasarathi Sanyal and Satkari Lahiri in Baranagore. I thought that the temple-garden of Rasmani would be near their house, but the more I walked the road did not seem to end. Anyhow, asking my way I reached Dakshineswar and went straight to the room of Sri Ramakrishna. I found him sitting like before on the low cot by the side of his bed, alone and absorbed in his own mind—none was near him. Seeing me, with great joy he called me near and made me sit on a part of his cot. Just after sitting I found that he was possessed by a strange mood and was muttering something indistinctly. Looking steadfastly he was slowly moving towards me. I thought the mad man would perhaps do some mad performance like the previous day. No sooner did I think thus than he came at once to me and placed his right foot on my body and by the touch of it, in a moment a wonderful experience came on me. With my eyes open I began to see that the walls of the room together with all things in it were whirling round and round with great motion and merging in a far-off distant unknowable. And the universe, with my individuality, was running to lose themselves in an all-devouring transcending Void. Then overcome with great fear I thought, the loss of individuality

is death, and that death is before me—very near! Unable to control myself I cried out, 'O Sir, what is this you have done to me, I have my father and mother!' The strange mad man hearing my words, laughed in ecstasy and touching my bosom with his hands began to say, 'Then let it remain now, not at once but in the fulness of time.' And wonder to relate, by his touch and speaking these words, my wonderful experience vanished at once. I returned to my normal condition and saw the objects within and outside the room standing like before.

"It took me such a long time to relate but the phenomenon passed off within a very short time and it brought a revolution in my mind. Stupefied I began to think, what is this phenomenon? I found that it came and vanished by the power of a strange person. I had read of mesmerism and hypnotism in books and thought—is this experience one of that class of phenomena? But my mind did not assent to that conclusion. For hypnotism or mesmerism is induced in persons of weak mind by persons of powerful will exercising their influence over them. But I am not like that; on the contrary, so long I have prided myself on being endowed with exceptional intellectual and mental power. As ordinary persons coming in contact with exceptional personalities are charmed and overpowered and become a tool in their hands, I have not been similarly affected by seeing him. But from the very beginning I have thought him to be half-crazy man. Then what is the reason of my sudden transformation? Thinking, I could come to no conclusion and it set a great agitation within my being. The words of the poet came to the mind, "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in

your philosophy.' I thought it was a similiar miraculous phenomenon and no clue would be obtained of it. Therefore I firmly resolved to resist this strange mad man getting control over my mind in future by exercising his influence and bringing such mental transformations again.

"Again I began to think, that if this person by his mere wish could break the firm mould of a strong-willed mind and like a clod of earth shape it in the mould of his own thoughts, how could I call him mad? But on the occasion of my first meeting him he took me aside and the strange address he made to me and the words he spoke—how could they be regarded otherwise than as the freaks of a mad mind? Therefore as I could not understand the cause of the wonderful experience narrated above, neither could I come to a sure conclusion about this person, pure and innocent like a child. Ever since the awakening of my intellectual faculties, I could never rest without coming to a conclusion about persons or things by the help of philosophy, arguments or discussion, and that tendency being baffled and thwarted in the present case I felt a pain in the mind. As a result a great resolve arose in the mind that I must gauge the truth of the power and character of this wonderful personality.

"Thus in many thoughts and resolves that day passed. After the aforesaid event Sri Ramakrishna became an altogether changed man and as on the previous occasion began to show great love and affection for me in many ways and fed me and behaved with me like one long familiar with him. Meeting a dear relative or a friend after a long time, as one is overjoyed and behaves, similarly he behaved with me. Feeding me, talking to me,

loving me, making fun and banter, he was finding no end to his delight. His love and affectionate behaviour towards me was the cause of no small thought to me. By and by as the afternoon passed and evening came, I asked leave of departure from him for the day. He felt much pained by it and saying, 'Promise that you will come again,' he again entreated me. So I had to return home that day also from Dakshineswar, promise-bound to come again as on the previous occasion."

How many days after his second visit Narendranath came again to Sri Ramakrishna is not known to us. But we think that after getting the knowledge of the wonderful power in Sri Ramakrishna, and judging from the strong desire to know and study him which arose in his mind, it was not long before he came again to Dakshineswar. Only perhaps in the inter-

ests of his study at college it was delayed by a week's interval. If the inclination to enquire and study a subject arose in his mind, Narendranath would pay little attention to his food, rest or recreation in its pursuit and so long as he could not master it he would get no peace of mind. Therefore, that his mind would be similarly affected to know about the personality of Sri Ramakrishna can be inferred. Again it can be inferred that he must have come on his third visit making himself cautious and firm in mind, apprehensive that a similar transformation of his mind might not come on him as on the former occasion. But the actual event still turned out to be wonderful and unthought-of. As we have heard from Sri Ramakrishna and S. N. Narendranath about it, we will relate to the reader.

(To be continued).



SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.—A STUDY.

"THE credit of the race" says Emerson, "goes with its great men." Judged by this criterion laid down by one of the subtlest moral thinkers of the latest and consequently the freshest civilisation on earth, which is to some extent capable of looking at things with a vision free and simple as that of a child waking from a profound sleep roseate with dreams of splendid happiness, the place of India must be ranked as high in the scale of nations on earth, for she gave birth to two outstanding figures in the history of the modern world—two world-men who tower above most of their compeers by reason of their transcendental, spiritual and intellectual greatness. One is a master, a master in the truest sense of the word, because he held the soul of the disciple captive in the grip of his hand by dint of the tested and retested spiritual prowess of his soul instinct with the love of God and purity born of divinity, and the other is a disciple, a disciple in the truest

sense of the word—who offered up as a sacrifice his body and soul to the Master, consciously, deliberately and unreservedly and with a conviction born of comprehensive insight into the nature of the master and of the trust and fullest exercise of the powers of ratiocination of which the transcendently perspicuous brain of an exceptionally robust nature is capable—a brain, however, which did not disdain to confess the weakness of drawing unstintedly upon the resources of a capacious heart. It is a well-known fact that Swami Vivekananda possessed a heart, in fact he gave a far higher place to the heart than to the brain—a concession to human weakness which, perhaps, the votaries of lucre and what goes by the name of "success" in this "positive" age would have treated with contempt, had not the great Swami himself achieved a dazzling "success" before the great gathering of representative men in Chicago. But the great Swamiji, in whom the

feeling of individuality in this age of rationalistic individualism reached a supreme height and in fact proved at times highly embarrassing to him, did not feel ashamed to allow his brain to be informed by the promptings of his heart. He was not afraid of being swayed by impulses or, what is more, of being dubbed by the fickle and unthinking multitude as being inconsistent. Along with all other great and thinking men, he knew that so-called consistency "is a virtue" which in the language of Emerson "ought to be gazetted from dictionary." Thought is the greatest enemy of consistency until it ripens into a wisdom which invests the thought-determinations with apodeictic certainty. He knew that the only consistency which is worth having is consistency in sincerity of purpose and in the pursuit of what one considers to be right with undisguised zeal and unalloyed devotion. With the growth of humanity and the change of environments society and man must grow or change unless it or he chooses to die either a physical or a spiritual death. The larva grows into an insect and a chrysalis develops into a butterfly. It is a pity of pities that we weak mortals, enwrapped as we are in a pall of unenlightened ignorance and encrusted in a shell of obstinate egoism, fail to take note of this rudimentary law of nature, viz. the law of growth. The Swamiji was not of the common, not of the gregarious multitude whom the eccentric Polish philosopher, the great Nietzsche, rightly cauterised in the most trenchant terms. If anything, he was a child of freedom, a son of Amritam. Anything in the shape of bondage seemed to throttle him. The desire for expansion, continued infinite expansion, seemed to have verily possessed him and finally burst out the mortal vase which was, as it were, too weak to hold such a mighty soul. In the course of a conversation which the writer had in the Belur Math with Miss MacLeod, a charming, loving disciple whom Swamiji has left behind, Miss MacLeod remarked that to every question put to him by her in connection with the granting of certain indulgence, the Swamiji invariably replied in the affirmative. "Swamiji, shall I do this!" "Why not," was the uniform reply. She inhaled the lesson from Swamiji of absolute and unfettered freedom. Convention and pruderies he railed at undisguisedly. "Be free

in your gesture, posture and speech, look straight and bold. Rise up and raise"—seemed to have been his battle-cry.

This valiant devotee of immortal and absolute freedom, however, was a slave of slaves to his Master, an ostensibly weak-bodied, sensitive, shy and unfettered man quite unfit to hold the lion cub in leash: yet this he did and did it in such a way as perhaps no one else has done or dares to do. And this devotion to the Master was perhaps the source of his growing strength and the secret of his greatness. The efflorescence of life is love and the love of a pure spirit for another pure spirit is perhaps the highest form of love known on earth. Vivekananda without Ramakrishna is nothing, a mere graduate of the Calcutta University, a brilliant dilettante philosopher and a logic-chopper. But Vivekananda with Ramakrishna is a mighty force, a rushing avalanche threatening to deluge the whole land with the stream of divine enthusiasm, a thundering cannon reverberating the name and fame of his Master from land to land with doubled and redoubled force. Had Nietzsche even tasted the exquisite happiness of the submergence of one's individuality in that of a superior being, or the pleasure of what appears to be a paradox, e. g., the attainment of an unencumbered and unrestricted individuality through the conscious surrender of one's own self to an inspired master, the great philosopher would have, I think, been compelled to modify his opinion about the distinction of "master morality" and "slave morality"—a distinction which he has so skillfully brought out in his "Beyond good and evil," with undoubted originality and masterly force. Astute thinkers would have perceived that the man who renounces his individuality and separate being so as to merge it in that of his master whom he worships with the whole heart, is really capable of being a master of earnest men. It was one of the favourite ideas of Edmund Burke that those who would lead must themselves learn to obey. This the Swami Vivekananda did and did it in a way of which there is hardly any parallel, unless it is that of Mahavira (great hero). When Sri Ramachandra showered encomiums upon Hanuman, the great hero answered in true and real humility, "Master! slaves like me there are in numbers, but a master with your gifts there is

none." Obviously it was the same feeling of profound humility which deterred Swami Vivekananda—the "paragon of Vedantists" as styled by the celebrated Professor James of the Harvard University—from undertaking the writing of a life of his Master, lest by trying to describe that indescribable spirit-man he would project his own littleness into his greatness and thus introduce imperfections into a character before the grandeur of which every other character shrank in Swamiji's vision into littleness. In speaking of his Master, words seemed to fail him,—a thought of his Master awed him, as it were, into silence and description seemed vulgar. The great Belgian dramatist Maelinckx shows how there is a language of the soul. When a soul speaks to a soul, silence is the meetest language. Words are not allowed to defile the exquisite stillness of thought. But with all this humility the Swamiji was a superman not of course of the Nietzsche type, but of a supernal type.

Swami Vivekananda was no common man dallying with the commonplace pleasantries of daily life, following the path traced out for him by others, adorning the subtle desires of men with spurious embellishments of a romantic imagination and passing them on to the people as things of God. He saw things straight and bluntly called them by their proper names. He was a type, a name, a principle embodied. Type of what? Name of what? He was the type of Modern Bengal, passing through the travail of transition, and looking with one eye to the past, with the second to the present and with a third eye to the future. It is a truth which has been proved almost to demonstration that even the highest roamings of intellect or imagination or the attainment of a highly cosmopolitanistic or humanistic frame of mind cannot entirely free one from the influences of his nativity. What is loosely called "liberal" in the common parlance of certain anglicised and christianised Indians is merely another name for the dehumanised and denaturalised propensities of the professors this cult. It would therefore be a folly to assert that the Swamiji's Brahma-jnana enabled him completely to dissociate himself from the tendencies which he inherited from his haunts or the atmosphere in which he breathed from his infancy up to the time when he came of age.

Had this been so, the soul of young and virile Bengal would not have throbbed in such spontaneous sympathy with his utterances. His capacity for rousing the imagination of young, ardent, active and hopeful Bengal is an unfailing index of the tendency of the innermost core of his mind which was that of a Bengali of the present age. Like most of his compatriots with a serious bend of mind, Swamiji passed through the great Brahma movement of thought, which was the necessary offshoot of ingrafting a scion of English education upon the stock of the Bengali community. Its denunciation of prejudices and superstitions of all sorts, its loud and emphatic proclamation of the liberty of individual conscience and consequent exaltation of the individual in his own estimation, the proselytising zeal with which in the intoxication of a first enthusiasm the first missionaries of this movement preached their cult, the militant energy which they displayed, and the martyr-like persecutions which they suffered at the hands of their malefactors, must have fascinated the impressionable soul of Vivekananda in his tender years. It, however, did merely fascinate but could not capture it, for the Brahma movement was predominantly a critical, rationalistic and moral one. Its metaphysical foundations were not satisfying. As soon as the monster of rationalistic individualism which it brought into being, but would not allow it to grow to its fullest limits and extremest possibilities, came of age, it showed signs of revolt against paternal authority and eventually opened its awful jaws to devour its sponsor, a most painful and unequal struggle ensued—an awful scepticism invaded the souls of the neophytes. Just as Copernicus revolutionised astronomy by substituting the heliocentric theory for the geocentric theory, so also the Brahmos thought of revolutionising religion in India by making the man—the individual—the conscience—the centre and measure of religion, in place of authority, scripture and revelation. Dazed, however, by the glamour of the so-called discovery of a new religion its early advocates did not, as is quite natural, perceive its limitations which began to show themselves gradually, just as the ridges and rocks begin to peer through the water as the flood under which they were hidden for a time gradually recede off. It created expectations and aspirations which it

could not satisfy. It threw upon each individual the mighty task of finding out his God for himself, and the result was what was to be expected from the nature of things. It created a number of sceptics with no definite goal or objective in view. The anomalies, vital inconsistencies and paradoxisms came into view. Each preached his truths as the truth and consentaneously a babel of opinions was started.

This was one of the most crucial moments in the religious history of Bengal which has given to the world some of the world prophets. The despair born of profound intellectual scepticism is one of the worst afflictions which it is the lot of struggling mortals to suffer. The octopus of scepticism spread out its fatal arms to hold Swamiji in their grip and throttle him into spiritual death which has unfortunately befallen many. A death struggle ensued—solemn and awe-inspiring—between Maya with its negative and passive resistance, which is even more dreadful than positive and active resistance, and the indomitable spirit with its irresistible and insatiable desire to master her and wrest out her secret—the secret of existence, the goal of life, the far-off destiny to which humanity moves. Many entered upon the lists before him and after, but few returned unscathed or alive. To be face to face with bare naked facts of the world, to see them in all their hideousness and beauty, to be one of the facts himself, and himself to be a sport of nature, to suffer and enjoy and at the same time to keep aloof from them, to dissociate oneself from the associations, to dispossess the prepossessions and be a mere witness of things—is a task the mere contemplation of which makes one's head giddy. The heart quails, the mind fails before such a prospect. Yet this double task it is, which is laid upon all practical thinkers who are not mere theorists. He indeed is a hero who can accomplish this task and still retain enthusiasm for humanity and faith in a God whose soul is good. Many souls have been crushed under the overpowering weight of this tremendous task and ended their lives as egoistic and sneering cynics envying the happiness of others which they have lost the power to enjoy or share—a spectacle the pathos of which is indescribable—for there is none else in the world who can appreciate the agonies of failure in one who was once

ambitious enough to mount the highest ladder in the scale of existence. Swamiji himself was on the brink of this dark precipice—the abysmal pitfalls caught his view. His brains and soul were on the rack. Hope for the highest and the limitations of flesh and ego alternately swayed him to and fro.

The great Charles Darwin, a typical British thinker who keeps his eyes steadily fixed on observed facts and phenomena and never permits imagination or metaphysical quiddities to poach in their preserves marshalled a tremendous array of closely observed facts to prove that the fittest to survive this struggle for existence are the best and that dominance is the trade-mark of greatness whether moral or spiritual. Nietzsche, Trietsche and Von Bernhardt appear to be its philosophical exponents. Darwin was simply a refined edition, corrected and enlarged, of Hobbes who proclaimed that the ruling motive of human action was love of power. This doctrine, vulgar though it appears, is perhaps, by far the greatest enemy of Vedantism. The fact has to be faced that Darwinism is anti-Vedantic in its tendencies. Conquer, possess and enjoy are the watchwords of Darwin while renounce, redeem, Self-knowledge and peace are the shibboleths of Vedantism. In the final logic of things those opposing tendencies may be reconciled in a syncretic unity. But in the practical sphere the two views clearly point to distinct and apparently conflicting conceptions of life and its function. Our great hero Bhima Sena represents one type and Sukadeva the other. Of course the points of contact between the two are many, the most notable being that both insist on courage as an indispensable factor in this scheme and condemn irresolution as the worst enemy. This makes choice between the two still more difficult. The intellectual and moral difficulties of a man set between such a terrible dilemma can be more imagined than described. The victim's mind is "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought" and action is paralysed. Like Hamlet—the immortal picture of a noble soul caught in the coils of the viper of scepticism—he broods, "to be or not to be, that is the question." The life as it is lived by most people on earth seems to bear out Darwin's views. History which reflects the mental attitude of its writer, paints in glowing colour the

rise and fall of kingdoms, of men called great, the title to whose greatness rests on a great ambition to rule and shine in the limelight of popularity. A great English poet has christened ambition as the "last infirmity of noble minds." "Nothing succeeds like success," has been a proverb now—oft repeated and more often practised in life. Even so-called religious men and sects strive for "recognition." Nature seems to be unrelenting, ruthless and indifferent. Things which are valued by individuals most and coveted for eagerly are treated by nature as things of straw. She seems to be heartless—a condition which fills the heart of a selfish man with bitter anguish born of impotent rage and that of a noble man with dismay and pessimism.

Nevertheless there abides a set of men, a class by themselves, whose souls cry from their depths for something afar from, something above, something higher than the Darwinian scheme of things. The great love of men for life which is intrinsic in human nature and the concomitant desire to live well which involves the necessity for entering into competition with others on however small a degree, cannot but make cowards of us all at certain hours of trial and also selfish to a certain extent. Even high souls with the sincerest desire to live a clean life have to "pay their tax to the body" as Ramakrishna used to say—even their body is bespattered in the mire of struggle for existence. But both cowardice and selfishness contract the soul. Man loses his innocence. Devious courses of life give a tarnish to his elevated nature, or if he continues to be straight he succumbs to the perverse influences of society and dies with a broken heart like a butterfly clipped of its picturesque wings.

The paralogisms, antinomies and contradictions abounded. Any one of them is enough to wreck a life. Just as a mote of sand continues to irritate the eye until it is removed or dissolved, so too an unsolved life problem continues to smoulder in the bosom until it is solved. Imagine the difficulty of a sincere and aspiring soul when in addition to the weakness to which flesh is heir he is hemmed in on all sides by a serried phalanx of these. Yet this was actually the case with the Swami Vivekananda. With a burning sense of patriotism rooted in his

very nature and an inherent love of renunciation, it was with an aching pain in his heart that he saw the ideas and ideals which India preached and practised from the very dawn of her civilisation, being openly flouted also by her own children. The free and unrestrained manner of the West militated against the Indians brought up under traditions of restraint and culture. India had lost her self-consciousness. Years of political subjection bred in her children a spirit of servility in all things even non-political. A burning sense of shame must have rankled in the Swamiji's bosom at this spiritual abasement of his own people! India had lost her self-consciousness, her mission in life. All his studies failed to convince Swamiji that success in the world was all in all in life. Born in the land of Sannyasis where kings bow down to them, he could not bring himself to subscribe to the tenet of Darwin—and no real and genuine Indian perhaps can. He marched in the quest for God, the Brahma, the final solution of all contradictions. Nothing around him satisfied his ardent soul. The crude arguments and small reasonings advanced by interested thinkers and self-seekers could not satisfy the cravings of a soul which heard the universal song of the Vedas, *भियन्ते हृदयग्रन्थि छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः*. He became veritably mad. He knew that India lived for God. He would not certainly believe the Nietzschean theory or similar theories that the master-minds imposed these beliefs on humanity for the mere regulation of society. This is too black a charge against humanity. It was true, perfectly true that very few people have seen or known God or really believe in God, although whenever challenged most people emphatically protest of their faith in him—but it is a downright falsehood to assert that no master-mind has really believed in God and that all talk about Him is merely nonsense. The Swamiji with the mountain load of tortuous problems in his mind girdled his loins and addressed himself like the immortal pilgrim of John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's progress" for a journey in quest of God, a known God, a felt God, a sensed God—a journey which was memorable in the history of Bengal, memorable in the history of India, nay even more memorable in the history of the world. He was a beacon light to all young people of the day who were floundering in dark-

ness and despair. He fell into the slough of despond and the jaws of the giant of despair. But still he kept up courage and preserved his course with unvarying determination and resolve. At last his labours were rewarded with success. He met with the man of Dakshineswar—that strange combination of a child and man, that unique personality, that uncommonly simple and uncommonly complex individual,—that mysterious mystic—who held this impetuous and dashing youth spell-bound with the undefinable charm of his wonderful presence and made him follow the bend of his will, like unto a charmer who fascinates a hooded cobra with the music of his melodious pipe and makes its head rock to and fro with wistful eyes. His soul was filled with the thrill of a rapturous music the like of which he had never heard before. In him he met with the ideal of sublime and conscious purity—born not of mere innocence but of the fullest knowledge of the furthest reaches of human nature. In him he found the type of unworldliness which springs not from inexperienced ignorance but from a deliberate recoil of the soul from it owing to a thoroughly discriminative insight into its clammy and slimy character. In him he realised the pattern of absolute rectitude which shunned with horror and instinctive disgust all attempts at compromises and at patched-up treaties with the temptations of flesh. Above all he saw in him one who had actually seen and known God, whose God was not a mere intellectual figment of the brain or the illusory product of piously inclined but uninstructed and unrefined hearts. His was a substantive and objective God in whom he really moved and had his being. He possessed one thing above all—conviction and trust—thoroughly unlike the seeming conviction and trust of “possessed” people and the dogmatism of scatter-brained and narrow-hearted people which are oftener than not confounded with belief in God. His was not a mere belief—but a realisation of God. Swamiji felt an irresistible charm for him. His strong individuality, the sceptical way of his thinking and a great honesty of purpose stood long in the way of his consecrating himself to the service of the Master. He doubted and doubted again. There was protracted tussle between the master and the disciple. At last the master won and left to the world a legacy of

energy—the fire of God—which people call by the name Vivekananda. Like a meteor he rose in the firmament, flashed past people's eyes, dived into the illimitable ocean of infinity, leaving behind him trails of undying glory. Ramakrishna was the life and Swamiji the body. Ramakrishna was the teacher and Swamiji the preacher. Ramakrishna was the soul and Swamiji the flesh. Ramakrishna was his life, Ramakrishna was his thought and Ramakrishna was his being. We all know that when Sri Krishna departed from this world, the great Arjuna, in describing whose prowess and exploits the author of the Mahabharata felt a ceaseless delight and never felt tired—this great warrior felt that all his prowess had departed from him—he was like an imbecile. The man who earned the name of Vijaya, because he never returned without victory, was easily beaten by a band of mountaineers. I cannot vouch for the historical accuracy. I devoutly wish that this were so. But whether it is historically true or not, in the ethical and spiritual world, the truth of this story holds good beyond all doubt. Every one who has a spark of imagination or thought left in him and has not allowed the brute struggle for existence and petty desire for social supremacy to sponge out entirely these two things from his nature, will bear us out when we repeat the oft quoted but none the less priceless saying that “Man does not live by bread alone.” It is my deep-rooted conviction that it was the hallowed memory of his Master that supported Vivekananda in all his splendid works. Ramakrishna was his inspiration. No worker or thinker can even pretend to say that he is able to keep uniformly an even temper in this world of continuous struggle and discord. There is bound to come inevitable hours of tedium, despair and disgust. We cannot say that Vivekananda was an exception to the universal rule. He had also his hours of weakness. But what sustained him in those hours! It was—at least this is my belief—the memory of his beloved Master.

SURENDRA NATH CHAKRABARTI, M. A.

VIVEKACHUDAMANI.

(Continued from page 234.)

जले वापि स्थले वापि लुठवेप जडात्मकः ।

नाहं चालिष्ये तद्धर्मैर्धृष्टधर्मैर्नभो यथा ॥५०६॥

509. Let this inert body drop down in water or on land, I am not touched by its properties, like the sky by the properties of the jar.

[*Not touched.....jar*—Just as the sky seemingly enclosed in a jar is one with the infinite sky, and is always the same whether the jar is broken or not, similarly is the Atman always the same despite its apparent relation to the body.]

कर्तृत्वभोक्तृत्वखलत्वमत्तता-

जडत्वबद्धत्वविमुक्ततादयः ।

बुद्धेर्विकल्पा न तु सन्ति वस्तुतः

स्वस्मिन् परं ब्रह्मणि केवलेऽद्वये ॥५१०॥

510. The passing states of the Buddhi such as agentship, enjoyment, cunning, drunkenness, dullness, bondage, freedom and so on, are never, in reality, in the Self, the Supreme Brahman, the Absolute, the One without a second.

[The Atman is Knowledge Absolute, which admits of no change, while the Buddhi or determinative faculty, being inert, is subject to change. So the confusion of the characteristics of the Self with those of Buddhi is solely due to superimposition.]

सन्तु विकाराः प्रकृतेर्दशधा शतधा सहस्रधा वापि
किं मेऽसङ्गचित्तस्तेन घनः क्वचिदम्बरं स्पृशति ॥

511. Let there be changes in Prakriti in ten, hundred, or a thousand ways, what have I—the unattached Knowledge Absolute—got to do with them?—Never do the clouds touch the sky!

[*Prakriti*—the Undifferentiated, described in Slokas 108 and following.]

अव्यक्तादिस्थूलपर्यन्तमेत-

द्विधं यत्राभासमात्रं प्रतीतम् ।

व्योमप्रख्यं सूक्ष्ममायन्तहीनं

ब्रह्माद्वैतं यत्तदेवाहमस्मि ॥५१२॥

512. I am verily that Brahman, the One without a second, which is like the sky, subtle, without beginning or end, in which the whole universe from the Undifferentiated down to the gross body, appears merely as a shadow.

[*Appears.....shadow*—to the ignorant.]

सर्वाधारं सर्ववस्तुप्रकाशं

सर्वाकारं सर्वगं सर्वशून्यम् ।

नित्यं शुद्धं निश्चलं निर्विकल्पं

ब्रह्माद्वैतं यत्तदेवाहमस्मि ॥५१३॥

513. I am verily that Brahman, the One without a second, which is the support of all, which illumines all things, which has infinite forms, is omnipresent, devoid of multiplicity, eternal, pure, unmoved, and absolute.

[*Support of all*—being the one substratum of all phenomena.]

यत्प्रत्यस्ताशेषमायाविशेषं

प्रत्यग्रूपं प्रत्ययागम्यमानम् ।

सत्यज्ञानान्तमानन्दरूपं

ब्रह्माद्वैतं यत्तदेवाहमस्मि ॥५१४॥

514. I am verily that Brahman, the One without a second, which transcends the endless differentiations of Maya, is the inmost essence of all, beyond the range of consciousness,—which is Truth, Knowledge, Infinitude, and Bliss Absolute.

[*Maya*—Same as Prakriti or Avyakta.

Truth—may be translated as Existence. This line sets forth the *Svarupa Lakshana* or essential characteristics of Brahman, as distinct from its *Tatastha Lakshana* or indirect attributes, such as creatorship of the universe and so on.]

निष्क्रियोऽस्म्यविकारोऽस्मि

निष्कलोऽस्मि निराकृतिः ।

निर्विकल्पोऽस्मि नित्योऽस्मि

निरालम्बोऽस्मि निर्द्वयः ॥५१५॥

515. I am without activity, changeless, without parts, formless, absolute, eternal, without any other support, the One without a second.

[*Without.....support*: Brahman is Itself Its own support.]

सर्वात्मकोऽहं सर्वोऽहं सर्वातीतोऽहमद्वयः ।

केवलाखण्डबोधोऽहमानन्दोऽहं निरन्तरः ॥५१६॥

516. I am the Universal, I am the All, I am transcendent, the One without a second. I am Absolute and Infinite Knowledge, I am Bliss, and indivisible.

[*Indivisible*—without break.]

स्वाराज्यसाम्राज्यविभूतिरेषा

भवत्कृपाश्रीमहिमप्रसादात् ।

प्राप्ता मया श्रीगुरुवे महात्मने

नमो नमस्तेऽस्तु पुनर्नमोऽस्तु ॥५१७॥

517. This splendour of the sovereignty of Self-effulgence I have received by virtue of the supreme majesty of thy grace. Salutation to thee, O glorious, noble-minded Teacher,—salutations again and again!

[*Self-effulgence*—hence, absolute independence. The disciple is beside himself with joy, and hence the highly rhetorical language.]

महास्वप्ने मायाकृतजनिजरासृत्युगहने

भ्रमन्तं क्लिश्यन्तं बहुलतरतापैरनुदिनम् ।

अहंकारव्याघ्रव्यथितमिममत्यन्तकृपया

प्रबोध्य प्रस्वापात्परमवितवान्मामसि गुरो ॥५१८॥

518. O Teacher, thou hast out of sheer grace awakened me from sleep and completely saved me, who was wandering, in an interminable dream, in a forest of birth, decay and death created by illusion, being tormented day after day by countless afflictions, and sorely troubled by the tiger of Egoism.

[*Sleep*—of Nescience, which also creates the 'dream,' two lines further on.

Forest—i. e. difficult to come through.

Day after day: It is a well-known fact that even a short dream may, to the dreamer's mind, appear as consisting of years.]

नमस्तस्मै सदैकस्मै कस्मैचिन्महसे नमः ।

यदेतद्विष्णुरूपेण राजते गुरुराज ते ॥५१९॥

519. Salutation to thee, O Prince of Teachers, thou unnamable Greatness, that art ever the same, and dost manifest thyself as this universe,—thee I salute!

[*Greatness &c.*—The Guru is addressed as Brahman Itself by the grateful disciple. Hence the use of epithets applicable to Brahman. Compare the salutation Mantram of the Guru-Gita: "The Guru is Brahmā, the Guru is Vishnu, the Guru is Shiva, the God of Gods. The Guru verily is the Supreme Brahman. Salutations to that adorable Guru!"]

इति नतमवलोक्य शिष्यवर्यं

समधिगतात्मसुखं प्रबुद्धतत्त्वम् ।

प्रमुदितहृदयं स देशिकेन्द्रः

पुनरिदमाह वचः परं महात्मा ॥५२०॥

520. Seeing the worthy disciple who had attained the Bliss of the Self, realised the Truth, and was glad at heart, thus prostrating himself, that noble, ideal Teacher again addressed the following excellent words:

ब्रह्मप्रत्ययसन्ततिर्जगदतो ब्रह्मैव तत्सर्वतः

पश्याध्यात्मदशा प्रशान्तमनसा सर्वास्ववस्थास्वपि ।

रूपादन्यदेवेक्षितं किमभितश्चक्षुष्मतां दृश्यते

तद्वद्ब्रह्मविदः सतः किमपरं बुद्धेर्विहारास्पदम् ॥

521. The universe is an unbroken series of perceptions of Brahman, hence it is in all respects nothing but Brahman. See this with the eye of illumination and a serene mind, under all circumstances. Is one who has eyes ever found to see all around anything else but forms? Similarly, what is there except Brahman to engage the intellect of a man of realisation?

[*Series.....Brahman*—Existence, Knowledge, and Bliss which are the Essence of Brahman can be found, upon analysis, as underlying every perception of ours. By another way of reasoning, the world is simply Brahman seen through a veil of name and form, which are contributed by the mind. It is X + mind, as Swami Vivekananda has put it.

One who has eyes—suggests a discriminating man whose view of life will be different from that of the ordinary man. Hence he can generalise the objective world as so many *forms*. 'Form' implies 'colour,' which also is a meaning of the word 'Rupa.']

कस्तां परानन्दरसानुभूति-

मुत्सृज्य शून्येषु रमेत विद्वान् ।

चन्द्रे महाहादिनि दीप्यमाने

चित्रेन्दुमालोकयितुं क इच्छेत् ॥५२२॥

522. What wise man would discard that enjoyment of Supreme Bliss and revel in things unsubstantial? When the exceedingly charming moon is shining, who would wish to look at a painted moon?

(To be continued.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor, "Prabuddha Bharata."
Sir,

As is customary each year, seventeen members of the Vedanta Society of San Francisco spent the month of June at the Shanti Ashrama in the St. Antoine Valley in the practice of Yoga with our beloved teacher, the Swami Prakashananda. For the first time the men predominated in numbers. It is a cause for great congratulation that our Swami seems gifted with the power of drawing all sincere souls to a point of intense ardour and devotion towards God. In this Western world where the great struggle and reaching out is for material gain and sense-enjoyment, it is very noticeable and uplifting to see so many young men turn their backs on the worldly things and seriously strive to follow the teachings that the Swami so benevolently gives them.

At first the attempts at meditation and concentration require all our courage and determination, and for the first time we are face to face with ourselves as we are, and not as we would like to be or should be. Then, too, comes the realisation of how very practical are the methods taught for gaining the mastery of self, thereby making a foundation for real spiritual growth, and so with our efforts each day there comes a peace and contentment in the fact that we at least have taken a real and vital step in our evolution.

To the spreading oak tree which bears the symbol of Siva on three sides, we repaired three times a day for meditation. Under its huge limbs which reach far out covering the platforms, is an atmosphere of peace and holiness made so by the many chantings of the name of the Lord and by the Swamis who have visited the place for years.

The meditation begins with chanting by the Swami; then a half hour's meditation, followed by readings from the "Life of Sri Ramakrishna," "Crest Jewel of Discrimination," "Upanishads," and a hymn ended the hour's devotion—and the students returned to their cabins singing praises to the Lord as they went.

The weather this year was ideal, and as the students took charge of the details in the kitchen (cooking, etc.), the Swami was enabled to enjoy somewhat of a rest which was urgently needed after his strenuous year of lecturing in the city.

And the night of nights—"Dhuni night"—was celebrated on the 19th of June. A night that stays stamped on our memories as the most sacred and solemn of the year—with the walking around the sacred fire, with the chanting of "Hari bol!" followed by meditation and hours of reading by the Swami from "Guru Gita," "Upanishad," etc., an occasional hymn by the ladies, then more reading from Swami Vivekananda's works.

After the midnight offering into the fire for purification of our heart and soul, many students were given Sanskrit names by the Swami. The ceremony commenced by invoking the Holy Ones and our Blessed Lord Sri Ramakrishna to bless each and every student there. If every prayer was answered then surely our Lord Ramakrishna must have come at the deep earnest call of our Guru to Him. The hill upon which we stood seemed to

lift us closer to heaven, and as the night was cloudless there seemed to be no barrier between us and the infinite—so peaceful and holy was everything. After the bestowing of the Sanskrit names Swami requested each student to say a few words. Then was displayed how deep and sincere was the devotion of the student. For men who had a short time before been worldly were overcome by the exquisite exultation of love and devotion and found it difficult to express themselves.

Truly a wonderful privilege is ours to have such close association with a great soul and through him to be in touch with a Saviour of the World.

Om Hari Om.

(Sd.) Durga Devi.

(Mrs. Clara M. Pette).

San Francisco, Cal.

Sept. 1920.

REVIEWS.

The New Economic Menace, by Bipin Ch. Pal.
Messrs. Ganesh & Co., Madras.

This book is a consideration of India's present economic condition and of the forces which will influence it in the future. The author sees a great danger in the new-development of economic policy, which is to develop the economic resources of India to its utmost by means of State-aid and State-partnership with private capitalist amalgamations. The author's argument is that such an economic policy will result in intensive exploitation of India's raw-materials (to a far greater extent than what is now done merely by the private enterprise of capitalists without State-aid) without any return of proportionate gain to and increase of the economic condition of the Indian people. In such a policy, the Indians will only receive the wage of the labourer and the greater portion of the profits will go to the foreign capitalists. The author admits that in the present state of lack of fluidity of Indian capital, foreign capital is needed to develop Indian industries and resources, but he argues that the best way of inviting and utilising foreign capital is not by allowing foreign capitalists to exploit Indian resources freely, but by means of

floating foreign loans in foreign markets with a lien on some heads of revenue. Such a loan, which will be guaranteed by Indian Government and revenue, will surely be tempting to foreign capital, which can then be turned into developing the economic resources of the country by means of industries and business managed by Indian personnel and the loan paid off by the profits of such business.

The author rightly argues that European industrialism is not suited to the socio-economic structure of Indian society and if transplanted will disrupt the bonds of our society and subvert our spiritual and ethical values. Industrialism is the monstrous and giant product of capitalism and it has raised more evils in society than it has solved. Our society is suited to the form of home and cottage industries which at one time contributed to the flourishing economic condition of India and enriched the world's market by its arts and crafts. At any rate it tended to the more equal distribution of wealth among the people, and did not contribute to the economic serfdom of large masses of people, nor did it give rise to many of the cruel problems of ruined humanity, constant unrest, and class-strife which industrialism has raised in Western societies.

The author's argument that the establishment of Labour will be the triumph and vindication of our cultural aim is what we fail to see. Labour may be helpful in furnishing a basis of equal chances and equal opportunities of life to all, for man to realise his physical manhood and enjoy his economic being and then rise to the realisation of his inner Divinity and spiritual consciousness. But there is as much risk for man in a condition of wider diffusion of physical well-being, comfort and ease to be immersed only in his physical being, as hope that he will rise out of it by development and enjoyment on the physical plane to the plane of the Spirit and its Bliss. For we see nothing spiritual in manual labour in itself. The equalisation of opportunities and status in life which Labour-movements aim at, may form a starting-point for man to develop his physical manhood and enjoy his economic and hedonistic being and this is needed as a first sum of experience for man to realise the Divine in him, for as our Scriptures say, without *bhoga* no *vaga* comes,

without working out the values of the present life, the higher integration of them in the Spirit is not possible. Labour-movements are now concentrated on the work of the diffusion of physical well-being, economic prosperity among men, and there are not any spiritual impulses at work which are discernible. On the other hand there is the risk that when labour triumphs there may be a great undervaluing of the values of existence and a loss of refinement and culture, for manual Labour is a symbol of what is most outward in man, his physical and economic being and if that becomes the guiding motive and standard of society and social values, the higher faculties of man, the importance and claim of his intellectual and spiritual being may be obscured and depressed, resulting in greater crudity and grossness of life and its values. Therefore it will be a mistake to think that Labour-movement, unless co-operating spiritual forces are set at work, will of itself translate the spiritual principle and ideal, the revealment of the God in man, into practice in a spiritualised human society.

The book is written in a clear, racy style, and its exposition of economic principles and their bearing on India's economic condition is vivid and perspicuous so that even a lay-reader can grasp the author's contention.

Essays on Educational Reconstruction in India, by K. M. Panikkar, B. A. (Oxon), Professor of History at M. A. O. College, Aligarh. Messrs. Ganesh & Co., Madras.

This is a small volume of Essays on the burning educational problems of the day, which deals with the topics of national education, "Vernaculars as media of Instruction in secondary schools," "University Reforms" and "The training of children." The author's balanced erudition coupled with his extensive acquaintance with the foreign system of education entitles him to speak with a considerable amount of authority on the subject. Moreover his writings exhibit a vigorous and trenchant style which breathes a spirit of courageous conviction and the fire of patriotism.

The author lays bare the fundamental defects of the present system of education in the country which has led to an immense intellectual wastage owing to an all-embracing and minute control

by the State of the educational machinery. So, according to the author, the vital problem of the day is to strike out a better policy of a national programme of education, as it is on the educational reconstruction of the country that the salvation of India depends, for "nationalism ignorant is nationalism ineffective." The nationalist effort in education should be directed not merely towards whittling the state-control but in the constructive work of building up local institutions of great variety of character and embodying different national ideals and culture. Every system of education, he says, should have both the binding conservation of the social tradition and the fluid mobility of a progressional element. The Gurukul has utterly failed to satisfy the necessary conditions that mark the change from a static to a dynamic state of society and shows in bold relief an intellectual insincerity absolutely incompatible with true education, on account of an awful divorce of "life in knowledge and life in reality." But the Santiniketan of Bolpur represents the principle of individual freedom; so the author remarks—"The Gurukul stands for the control and therefore the limitation of the future by the experience or the realised ideal of the past. Bolpur stands for the ideal of free development deriving inspiration from tradition, but hindered as little as possible by the dead-weight of a desire to bring back into existence an institution out of which life had flown centuries ago." But institutions meant for combating the present evils should have their origin not in the creative genius of a single man but in the general consciousness and the collective initiative of a nation. The Benares University, though a work of this kind, is almost as effectively controlled by the Government as its own institutions and as such fails to meet the crying demands of the age.

The vital problem of female education has not escaped the writer's serious attention. At this critical juncture of Indian life, every thoughtful man should have to devote a portion of his time to the consideration of the best methods whereby the females of our country can be educated. From one end of India to the other, all who understand are now agreed that the education of our women must needs, at this crisis, undergo some revision. Without their aid and co-operation none of the

tasks of the present can be finally accomplished. The author has tried to show how the demands of a healthy joint-family can be brought into harmony with the wider call of the community, without disturbing the whole fabric of social organisation.

Then comes the question of media of instruction. The question is widely being asked whether the time or energy spent in acquiring a foreign tongue like English, the genius of which is entirely different from ours, not only as a cultural language or commercial *Lingua Franca*, but mastering its grammar in order to try and use it as the vehicle of everyday thought and life, is not after all a stupendous intellectual ravage. This use of English as the sole medium of instruction in our schools is responsible for many of the great evils in our educational world. The author suggests that the real solution lies in substituting vernacular for English as the medium of instruction in schools, for by such substitution, not only will the students be able to study more thoroughly and understand things better but they will also be able to study more subjects. National India must wake up to this problem and on this depends the course of our national evolution.

The last, though not the least, are his luminous statements on the training of children and on the methods whereby there might be maximum utilisation and minimum wastage. He lays much stress on the æsthetic side of culture. The great reform that is required in the training of children is, so to say, a "de-intellectualisation" of the present system. Particular attention should be given to the unfettered growth of all the human faculties in the training of children so that the dormant potentialities might get proper scope for fuller and healthier development with the progress of their age.

This book is very useful and thought-provoking not only from the point of view of its critical and illuminating analysis of the present system of education but also from the standpoint of the light it throws on the future drift of the educational policy to be adopted for resurgent India. Everyone interested in education should care to read this instructive volume.

Himalayan Travels, by T. Jodh Sing Bagli Negi.

To be had of Messrs. Chackerburty Chatterjee & Co., 15, College Square, Calcutta. Price Rs. 5.

While we are awaking to all the beauties that lie about us, that which is contained in our literature, religion, philosophy, there is one national asset which is not sufficiently utilised and its benefits in life extracted—we mean the joys of travelling in the Himalayas. The Himalayas are associated with the best and glorious traditions of our race, sung by our poets, resorted to by the best of the race for meditation on the deepest mysteries of existence. It retains its charms which so captivated our ancestors and it overflows with such a holy atmosphere that there are few beautiful spots—a river valley, or a high towering peak—which have not a holy association, crowned with a temple, associated with a holy name. The Himalayas, not merely of the precincts of a modern hill-station with its atmosphere changed by the stream of pleasure-seekers, but of the villages nestling against high peaks, or embosomed in deep valleys, its forests of Deodar and other stately trees, the cadence of its rivers flowing with crystal water, the illimitable spaciousness of its atmosphere, the grandeur of its snow-peaks that have to be seen till they sink in our soul and recreate for us the blissful vision which our ancestors saw of it. The pilgrim routes of Kedarnath and Badrinath principally and of Gangotri and Jamnatri draw considerable number of people from the plains and that mostly from the poorer and illiterate classes. It is much to be hoped that our educated countrymen will be drawn in greater numbers to this Father of mountains, to appreciate and enjoy the beauty and sublimity of its sights and sounds and reap the benefits of its uplifting and ennobling surroundings and, last of all, to gain the power of physical hardihood which Himalayan travels confer.

The present book is a description of travels in the Himalayas undertaken by a gentleman of the hills. He describes three principal routes to the Himalayan central snow-range viz., by the Niti in Garhwal, by Melam in Johar and by the Lippu Pass to Tibet—the two latter are situated in Kumaon Himalayas. The last route is most extensively described and is carried up beyond the Himalayas to Tibet and the pilgrim routes of Mansarowar and

Kailas described. Lippu Pass is the easiest to go by for the routes to Kailas and Mansarowar as this Pass to Tibet is of lower height (about 16000 ft.) and has less snow than others during the months it is open, viz. from July to October. The book also describes the route to the Pindari Glacier situated in the Kumaon Himalayas.

The book describes the objects of interest on the route, the associated folklore and traditions of the hill people. The life, customs, and rites of the Bhotias, an interesting people who live in the higher Himalayas on this side of the central snow-range, are also given in detail and forms interesting reading. These people are of Tibetan racial stock who have migrated to this side, and are gradually assimilating practices, rites and customs of the Hindus of the lower hills. The book contains a graphic description of places and of picturesque scenes and is enriched with some photos. In short it will prove interesting and useful to tourists and travellers and pilgrims. It has a good get-up.

NEWS AND NOTES.

WE have received a copy of the Report of Sri Ramakrishna Students' Home, Bangalore City, for 1919-20 and are extremely glad to record the great progress it has made within an incredibly short period of time started under the noble impulse of a few friends of the R. K. Mission in Bangalore. This Students' Home has made suitable provision for giving free board and lodging to poor and intelligent students of all sects studying in the College and the High Schools and also for imparting to them the invaluable instruction on the practice and principles of the Hindu religion. The skilful management of the Home at the hands of the able committee constituted under the presidentship of Swami Nirmalananda has inspired such a confidence in the public mind that it has been able to secure a laudable footing in the city in these days of stress and scarcity.

Admission was restricted during the year under review to students of College and Entrance classes only. From amongst the 23 applicants for admission, 9 were selected, of whom 7 were students of the Entrance class, 1 of the First year B. A.

class and the other was of the final year B. A. class. In the public examination of April last the final B. A. student and two of the Entrance students passed their respective examinations. The Graduate student in the Mechanical Engineering School also completed his course. Every arrangement has been made for the harmonious development of head, heart and body and the present financial outlook of the Home holds up brighter prospects for widening the scope of its activities in the near future. The total income from all sources amounted to Rs. 2,630-6-4. Excluding a sum of Rs. 150 advanced towards house-rent for the current year, the total charges for the year came to Rs. 1,090-13-11, thus leaving Rs. 1,539-8-5 as the closing balance.

In view of the great usefulness and the prospects it holds up it is the earnest desire not only of the organisers but also of some of the ardent supporters of the institution that the Home should be placed on a permanent basis by the erection of a suitable building at the earliest possible opportunity. The want of a fully equipped library and a reading room is keenly felt for giving better facilities for the intellectual culture of the students. Though some kind-hearted gentlemen have come forward to bear the cost of constructing a room each, still we hope there would no want of a few more such friends among the benevolent public to make the permanency of the institution an accomplished fact. The Committee tender their heartfelt thanks to every one of the donors and subscribers but for whose hearty, generous and ready response and encouragement, the successful working of the Home would have been impossible. Contributions, however small, will be thankfully received by the President, Sri Ramakrishna Students' Home, Bangalore City.

WE are glad to go through the report of the Vivekananda Society, Calcutta, for the year 1919. Started many years ago, the Society has during the last four years been animated by a revived sense of its responsibility, as a result of which we find it undertaking quite a number of propaganda and philanthropic activities. During the year under review it organised 41 public religious and philosophical lectures, 12 monthly conversations, and 37 weekly religious classes; it celebrated

some anniversaries, and conducted a library and free reading room, and a charitable dispensary treating 848 new cases, besides the services of the worship-room. It helped 37 poor students with small monthly stipends, continued the Influenza relief work of the previous year and contributed Rs. 350 in aid of Cyclone relief in East Bengal. A notable feature of its activities was the organising of a competitive Prize Examination to encourage the study of the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda among its members. The Society had an increase of 131 members on its rolls during the year and its total income and expenditure during this period were Rs. 3,171-15-6 and Rs. 3,259-0-9 respectively, leaving a balance in hand of Rs. 1,046-14-6 at the end of the year. Swami Vivekananda and his Master, Sri Ramakrishna Deva, are the shining pillars of light to guide men and women of the present day, not only in India but throughout the world. It is therefore a matter of no small delight that the Calcutta Vivekananda Society has been strenuously exerting itself to carry the torchlight of Practical Vedanta as preached by the two great masters to all sections of the people. Consequently we have no hesitation in joining our voice to that of the Society itself in appealing for funds for a suitable habitation of its own—a disadvantage the Society has been seriously labouring under—and have every reason to hope that the call will be generously responded to by all admirers and devotees of the great Swami and the noble cause he advocated. Contributions for the building fund as well as for general expenses may kindly be sent to—The Hony. Secy., Vivekananda Society, 78/1 Cornwallis Street, Calcutta.

The work at the Vedanta Centre of Boston continued with increasing energy throughout the summer. Swami Paramananda remained in Boston from the middle of May until the 18th of August, conducting all Services and classes. He then left on an extensive western tour. His first stop was Cincinnati. Being the general vacation season, the members of the local Centre had not expected the usual attendance, but so great was the response to the announcement of the Swami's coming, that after the first lecture, the hall secured had to be exchanged for a larger one. He remained four

days in Cincinnati, delivering lectures every evening and holding a devotional Service on Sunday morning. The subjects of his lectures were: "The Divine Presence," "Pre-existence and Reincarnation," "Power of Thought" and "Higher Attainment through Yoga." He also gave a special Talk to the members of the local Centre on Saturday afternoon.

From Cincinnati the Swami went directly to Seattle, arriving there on Aug. 26th. Here he gave six lectures at the New Thought Temple. On the following Sunday, the 29th, he began another course of lectures at Dr. Henry Victor Morgan's church in Tacoma. His subjects were: "Spiritual Concentration," "The Source of Healing Power," "Occultism and Spirituality," "Life after Death," "The Power of Silence," "The Science and Practice of Yoga." Warm interest was manifested. After a brief visit to friends in Portland and a day in San Francisco, he arrived in Los Angeles on Sept. 9th and is now carrying on his usual schedule of meetings there.—Message of the East.

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